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Fantastic Four
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J'MLEE
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Stan Lee presents
FANTASTIC FOUR
REED! THAT IDIOT'S GOT HIS HANDS ON THE QUANTUM DRIVE!
AND FROM THE LOOKS OF IT, I'D SAY IT'S IN PRETTY BAD SHAPE! WE'VE GOT TO TAKE IT AWAY FROM HIM!
AND DENY ME MY DESTINY? NEVER!
I SHALL USE MY NEW-FOUND PRIZE TO DESTROY ONE OF YOUR METROPOLISES AS A SACRIFICE TO THE GREAT ONE TO COMMEMORATE HIS COMING!
YES! THEN HE WILL SEE THAT I AM TRULY WORTHY OF RULING THIS PLANET!
JOHNNY'S RIGHT! THE DRIVE'S SHIELDIN' COULD RUPTURE ANY MINUTE NOW!
IF THAT HAPPENS, WE'LL BE VAPORIZED ALONG WITH THIS ENTIRE ISLAND!
WHICH IS WHY IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE REGAIN CONTROL OF THE UNIT FROM THIS SO-CALLED MOLEMAN AND DEACTIVATE IT, BEN!
THE GREAT ONE? SACRIFICE?! WHAT IS HE RANTING AND RAVING ABOUT, REED?
LEE • CHOI • WILLIAMS
CHIODO/JIMENEZ/WILDSTORM FX
STARKINGS/COMICRAFT
HEISLER•HARRAS

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WHO CARES, SIS? ALL I KNOW IS THAT I'M TIRED OF EVERYONE PUSHING US AROUND!
I DON'T EXACTLY KNOW HOW WE GOT THESE POWERS, BUT IT'S TIME WE USE THEM TO PUSH BACK! HARD!
AND THE MOLEMAN, HERE, IS ON THE TOP OF MY LIST!
AIEEEEE
FWOOSH
FASCINATING! SUE, THE INTENSITY OF THE LIGHT GENERATED BY YOUR BROTHER'S FLAME APPEARS TO HAVE A DELETERIOUS EFFECT UPON THE MOLEMAN'S CREATURES!
JOHNNY, DON'T BE A FOOL! WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST HERE!
IT'S TOO LATE FOR HIM, WOMAN! SO LONG AS I WEAR MY VISOR, THE LIGHT FROM HIS FLAMES IS USELESS AGAINST ME!
BUT THIS IMPUDENT PUP WILL NEVERTHELESS TASTE THE UNBRIDLED POWER OF A DISRUPTER BLAST FROM MY ENERGY STAFF!
YEEARRGH!
WHUMP
GOT -- TO GET -- MY HANDS -- ON HIM!
FOOL! I CAN EASILY EVADE YOUR PATHETIC ATTACK WITH MY HEIGHTENED SENSES AND SUPERIOR AGILITY!

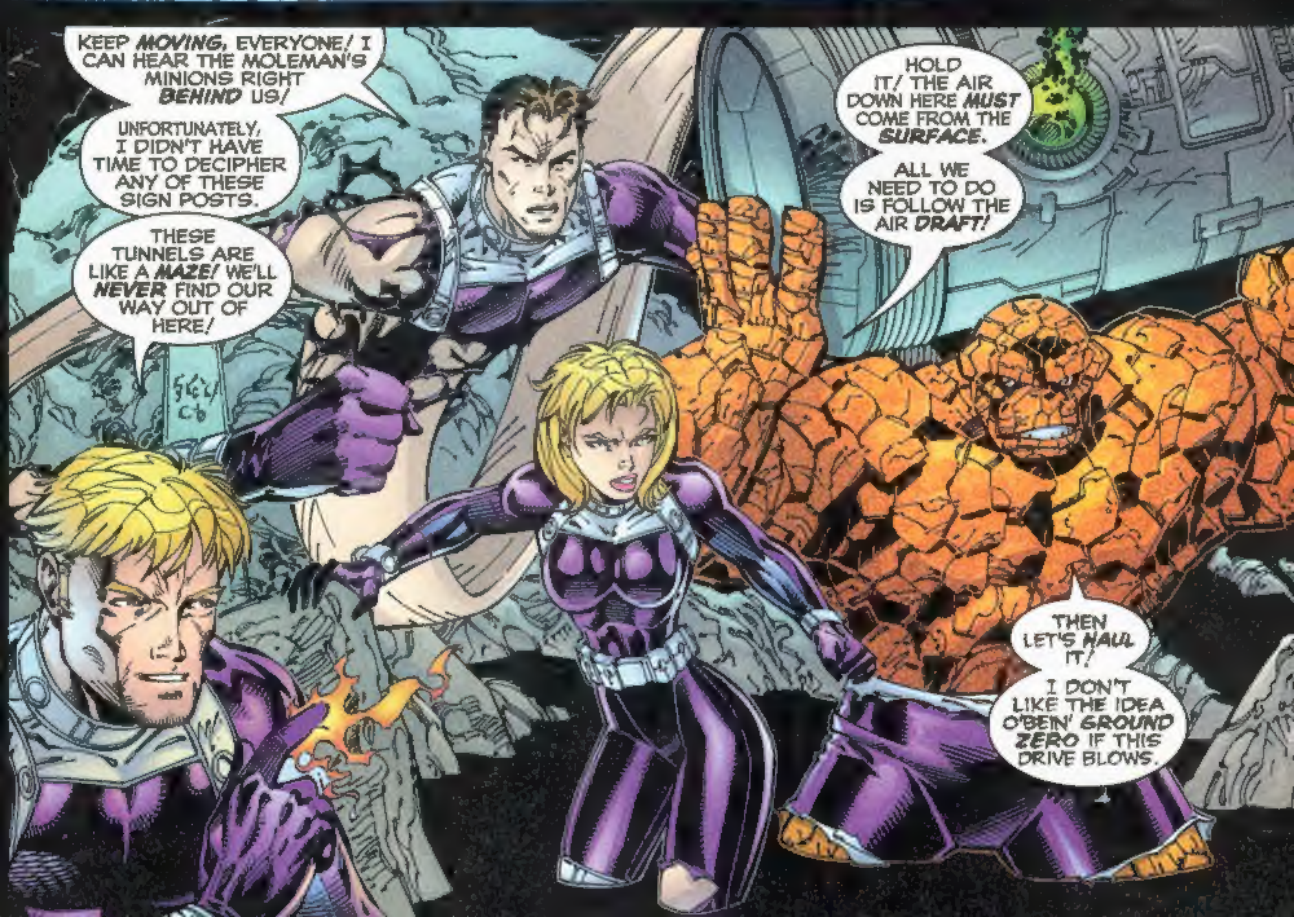
STRANGE! WHILE YOU POSSESS SUPER HUMAN POWERS, I SENSE THAT YOU ARE NOT ONE OF THE GREAT ONE'S CHILDREN!
IT MAY BE WORTHWHILE OFFERING YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS AS SPECIMEN TROPHIES TO CURRY HIS FAVOR!
JUST NEED -- A LITTLE MORE TIME -- TO RECOVER!
THEN WE'LL SEE -- Huh?
FZZNN
WHOK
NOT ONLY DO I CONTROL THESE UNDERGROUND CREATURES, BUT THE PLANT LIFE ALSO!
WHAT THE --?!
THE LICHEN WILL EXTINGUISH YOUR FLAMES, MY YOUNG FOE, AND LEAVE YOU AT MY MERCY! BUT DON'T WORRY, YOUR FRIENDS WILL SOON BE JOINING YOU!
PERHAPS THEN I SHALL PERMIT YOU ALL TO BEAR WITNESS TO MY MOMENT OF GLORY AS I PROVE MYSELF THE RIGHTFUL RULER OF THIS WORLD.
C'MON, YOU GUYS! DO SOMETHING!
ROARR
WATCH IT, REED! THE MOLEMAN'S GUARD DOG'S LOOKIN' REAL HUNGRY! HE'S COMIN' IN FAST AT SIX O'CLOCK!
REED! OVER THERE!
I SEE IT, SUE!
BEN, DIVERT THE FEMALE'S ATTENTION WHILE SUE AND I DEAL WITH THE MALE.
FEMALE? HOW'D YOU FIGURE THAT?

RROOARR
IF I'M CORRECT ABOUT MY EXTRAPOLATIONS WITH REGARDS TO THE MARKINGS OF THESE GIANT SUBTERRANEAN CREATURES, THE MORE COLORFUL ONE OF THE SPECIES IS THE MALE!
THEREFORE, I CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT THESE TWO ARE, IN FACT, MATES.
SWELL! WE'RE ABOUT TA GET MUNCHED FOR LUNCH AND ALL YOU CAN DO IS GIVE US A ZOOLOGY LECTURE! HOPE THAT AIN'T YOUR PLAN TO BEAT --
CRIPES! NOW LOOK WHAT YA DONE!
YA GOT ME SO DISTRACTED THAT I'M ABOUT TO END UP AN APPETIZER!
BUT AT LEAST NOW THEY'RE CLOSE ENOUGH TO EACH OTHER SO THAT I CAN WRAP MYSELF AROUND THEIR LEGS!
I SEE WHERE YER GOIN', REED!
I MAY STILL BE A LITTLE SHAKEN UP BY MY TRANSFORMATION, BUT I AIN'T AS DENSE AS I LOOK!
STAND CLEAR, EVERYONE, 'CAUSE...
CRUNCH

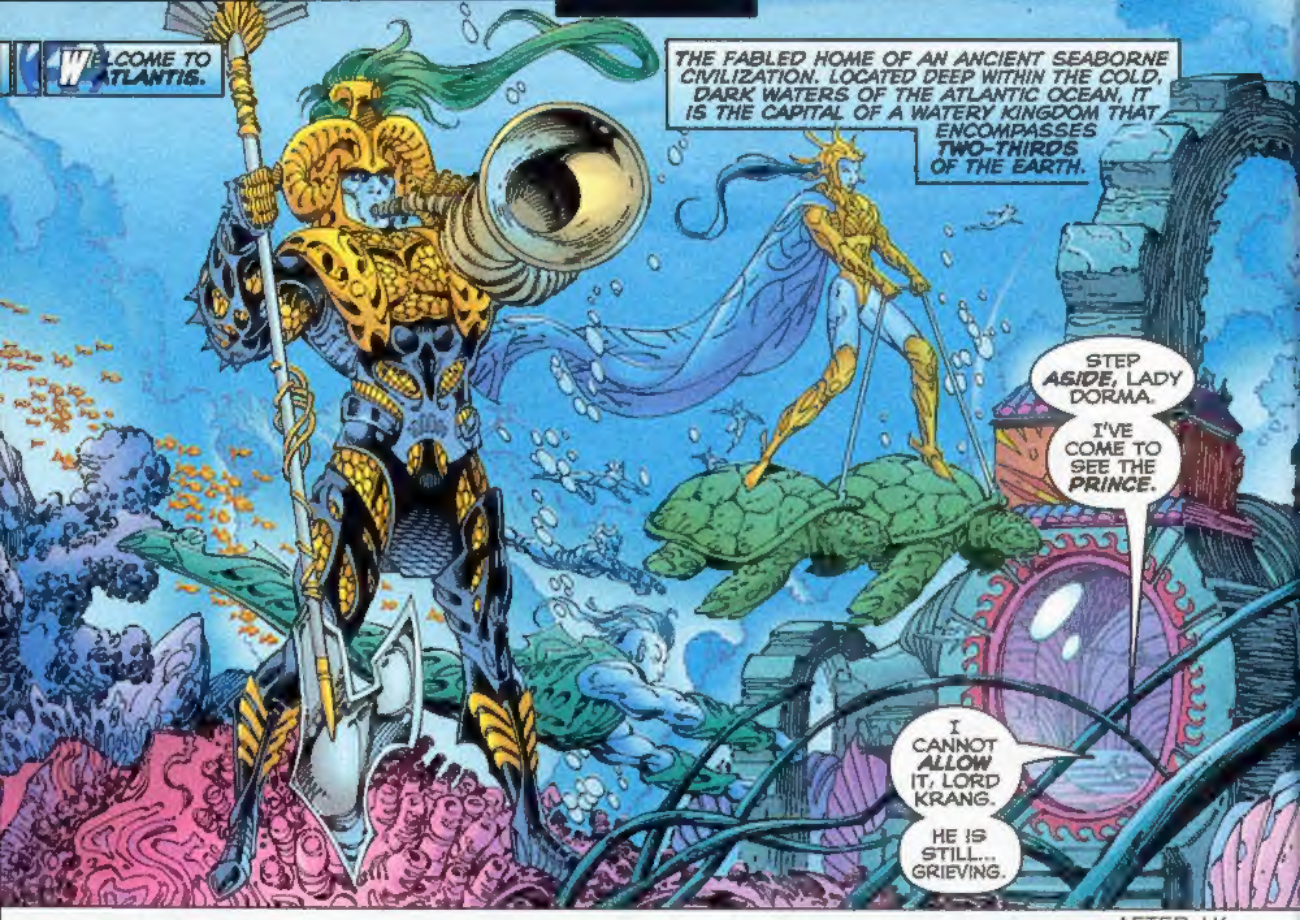
WHA
THUMP
... THESE TWO LITTLE LOVEBIRDS ARE ABOUT TA FALL HEAD OVER HEELS!
NICE BIT O' TEAMWORK THERE, STRETCH!
THOSE COSMIC RAYS MAY HAVE TURNED ME INTO A PILE O' ROCK. BUT IT LOOKS LIKE I GOT THE STRENGTH TA MOVE A MOUNTAIN.
REED! BEN!
THE REST OF THE MOLEMAN'S CREATURES ARE CLOSING IN ON US!
THEN WE MUST ACT QUICKLY. WHILE JOHNNY MAY HAVE BEEN IMPULSIVE, I THINK HE WAS ON THE RIGHT TRACK!
HURRY, BEN! GRAB THAT MASSIVE DIAMOND ON THE GROUND OVER THERE. WITH JOHNNY STILL WRAPPED UP BY THE MOLEMAN, WE'VE ONLY GOT ONE OTHER WAY OUT OF HERE!
RESISTANCE IS FUTILE! IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE MY MINIONS OVERWHELM YOU!
HE'S GOT A POINT THERE, REED. WHAT GOOD IS A DIAMOND THE SIZE OF A VOLKSWAGEN GONNA DO AGAINST ALL HIS GRUNTS?
TRUST ME, BEN. YOU'LL SOON SEE THE LIGHT!

SUE/ ONCE YOU'VE CLIMBED TO THE TOP OF THE CAVERN, I NEED YOU TO CREATE A THIN SHAFT UP TO THE SURFACE!
I'LL DO MY BEST, REED/
BUT WILL MY POWERS WORK THAT WAY?
IF YOUR CLOTHING BECAME INVISIBLE WHEN YOU USED YOUR POWERS, I'LL WAGER THAT YOU ALSO POSSESS THE POWER TO PROJECT THIS FIELD OF INVISIBILITY/
REED/ IT -- IT'S -- WORKING!
BUT -- SO DIFFICULT -- TO KEEP IT -- OPEN/
YOU MUST, DARLING/ IT MAY BE OUR ONLY HOPE!
THEN YOU'D BETTER HURRY, REED/
CAN'T -- MAINTAIN THIS SHAFT -- MUCH LONGER!
STRAIN -- IS -- MURDEROUS!
ALL RIGHT, BEN/ IT'S UP TO US NOW/
HOLD THE DIAMOND JUST AT THAT ANGLE.
GET A MOVE ON, STRETCH/
THE MOLEMAN'S GRUNTS ARE ABOUT TO CLIMB OVER YER...
... LITTLE BARRICADE/
ALL I HAVE TO DO NOW IS FOCUS THE BEAM OF LIGHT WITH THE LENS OF MY GLASSES TOWARDS THE DIAMOND.
STEADY, BEN...
HOLY COW/ THIS THING'S STARTIN' TO LIGHT UP...
... ALONG WITH THE REST O'THE JOINT/
AS I SUSPECTED, THE DIAMONDS MAGNIFY WHAT LITTLE LIGHT THERE IS DOWN HERE, AND AMPLIFY IT TO CREATE THE AMBIENT GLOW EFFECT.
BUT BY INTRODUCING PURE SUNLIGHT INTO THE CAVERN AND THEN USING THE DIAMONDS TO INCREASE ITS INTENSITY, I DO BELIEVE --

YOU'RE GOING TO LECTURE THE MOLEMAN TO DEATH?
THIS PLAN OF YOURS ISN'T GOING TO HAPPEN UNLESS I DO THIS!
Eh?! MY VISOR --
GIVE IT BA --
AAAGHH!
THE LIGHT!
NOOOOO!
YA DID IT, REED! THEY'VE ALL BEEN STUNNED!
LIKE DEER CAUGHT IN THE HEADLIGHTS OF A CAR!
NOW, BEN!
GRAB JOHNNY AND THE QUANTUM DRIVE!
IT'S TIME TO MAKE GOOD OUR ESCAPE WHILE WE HAVE THIS WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY!


KEEP MOVING, EVERYONE! I CAN HEAR THE MOLEMAN'S MINIONS RIGHT BEHIND US!
UNFORTUNATELY, I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO DECIPHER ANY OF THESE SIGN POSTS.
THESE TUNNELS ARE LIKE A MAZE! WE'LL NEVER FIND OUR WAY OUT OF HERE!
HOLD IT! THE AIR DOWN HERE MUST COME FROM THE SURFACE.
ALL WE NEED TO DO IS FOLLOW THE AIR DRAFT!
THEN LET'S HAUL IT!
I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA O'BEIN' GROUND ZERO IF THIS DRIVE BLOWS.

HALLELUJAH! WE MADE IT OUT ALIVE!
WE'RE NOT OUT OF DANGER YET, JOHNNY!
BEN, YOU'VE GOT TO SOMEHOW SEAL THE ENTRANCE TO THE TUNNEL, WHILE I DEACTIVATE THE QUANTUM DRIVE.
THIS WHAT YOU HAD IN MIND, BIG BRAIN?
WHAM
THAT OUGHTTA REALLY SHAKE THINGS UP DOWN THERE!
YOU FINALLY SHUT DOWN THAT DRIVE, REED?
YES, IT'S SAFE NOW, BEN.
PHEW! I... I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED TO US.
IT'S LIKE SOME KIND OF DREAM.
MORE LIKE A NIGHTMARE IF YA ASK ME.
AT LEAST YOU STILL LOOK... HUMAN.
SUE, WHAT HAVE I DONE?
I NEVER MEANT FOR ANY OF THIS TO HAPPEN.
WE'LL WORRY ABOUT THAT LATER, REED.
RIGHT NOW, OUR MAIN PROBLEM IS GETTING OFF THIS ISLAND.
THEN ALL YOUR PROBLEMS ARE SOLVED, Ms. STORM!
THOUGH MAYBE NOT QUITE THE WAY YOU IMAGINED!
WHOP!
WHAT NOW?!
REED!
LOOK OUT--


WELCOME TO ATLANTIS.
THE FABLED HOME OF AN ANCIENT SEABORNE CIVILIZATION. LOCATED DEEP WITHIN THE COLD, DARK WATERS OF THE ATLANTIC OCEAN, IT IS THE CAPITAL OF A WATERY KINGDOM THAT ENCOMPASSES TWO-THIRDS OF THE EARTH.
STEP ASIDE, LADY DORMA.
I'VE COME TO SEE THE PRINCE.
I CANNOT ALLOW IT, LORD KRANG.
HE IS STILL... GRIEVING.

AFTER J.K.

HOW LONG WILL HE KEEP BROODING OVER THE DEATH OF HIS BELOVED WHEN THE LIVES OF ALL HIS PEOPLE ARE AT STAKE?
THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO STRIKE BACK AT THE LAND DWELLERS BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!
YOU WOULD TALK OF BATTLE IN A TIME OF MOURNING?
ARE YOU SO HEART-LESS?

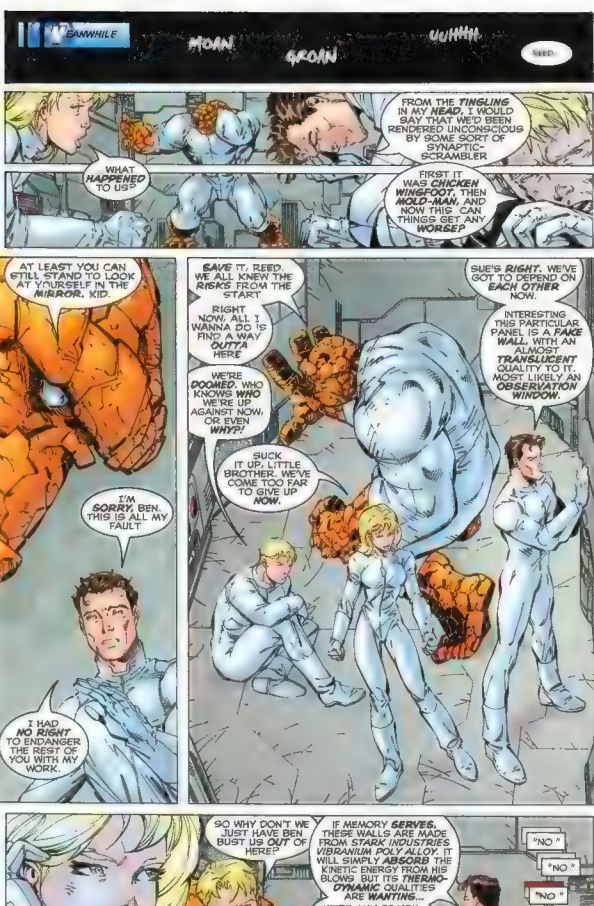
MY COMPASSION IS FOR ALL OF OUR PEOPLE WHO ARE DYING EVERY DAY BECAUSE OF THE LAND DWELLERS!
AND WITH OR WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT, LADY DORMA, I WILL HAVE AN AUDIENCE WITH HIM!

DO NOT PRESUME TO CHALLENGE MY AUTHORITY --
LORD KRANG!
Eh?!

ORTHUS, MY COUSIN/ WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOUR BETROTHED?
REVA AND I WERE RIDING THE CURRENTS OUT NEAR THE BORDER REEFS, WHEN WE WERE SUDDENLY OVERCOME BY THE BLACKWATERS!
LOOK AT THE PALLOR OF HER SKIN/ SHE HAS SUCCUMBED TO THE PLAGUE!
Oh -- No -- SHE'S DYING/
WH-WHAT CAN WE DO FOR HER, LADY DORMA?
LORD KRANG? WHERE ARE YOU TAKING --
WE MUST GET HER TO THE INFIRMARY AT ONCE/
NO, LADY DORMA/ SHE IS BEYOND OUR HELP/
BUT THIS IS THE PROOF I NEED TO SHOW THE PRINCE THE TREACHERY OF THE LAND DWELLERS/ HOW MANY MORE OF OUR YOUNG MUST DIE BEFORE HE DECIDES TO TAKE ACTION?
NAMOR!
I MUST SPEAK WITH YOU/

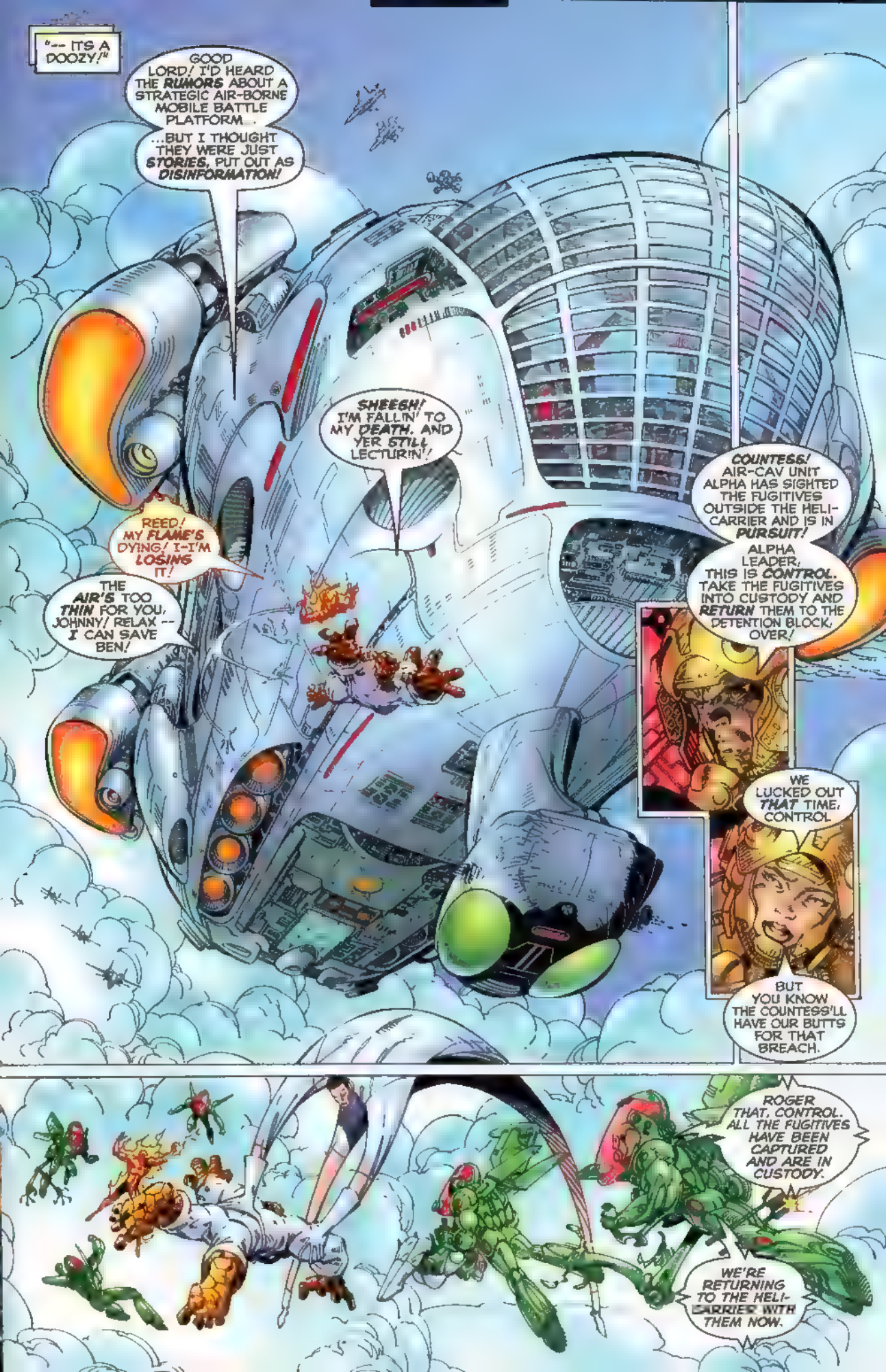
HE IS NAMOR, THE SUB-MARINER, RULER OF THE ATLANTEAN EMPIRE WITH A KINGDOM THAT SPANS ALL THE SEVEN SEAS, HE IS PERHAPS THE MOST POWERFUL MAN ON THE PLANET.
BUT UNLIKE HIS FELLOW ATLANTEANS, NAMOR IS FAIR SKINNED INSTEAD OF BLUE, A PRODUCT OF HIS HALF-ATLANTEAN AND HALF-HUMAN HERITAGE THIS FORTUITOUS COMBINATION OF GENES HAS IMBUED HIM WITH POWERS GREATER THAN ANY SINGLE ATLANTEAN OR HUMAN.
WHILE HIS MOTHER'S ROYAL BLOOD ANOINTED HIM THE RULER OF ATLANTIS, NAMOR'S FATHER'S BLOOD GIVES HIM THE ABILITY TO WALK AMONG -- AND SHARE A SPECIAL AFFINITY WITH -- THE LAND DWELLERS.
BUT AT THIS MOMENT, ALL THE GLORY AND POWER OF HIS BIRTHRIGHT AND HERITAGE CANNOT EASE THE PAIN AND SORROW HE FEELS IN HIS HEART DUE TO THE LOSS OF HIS BELOVED.
FOR THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, HE HAS SOUGHT SOLITUDE TO TAME THE RAGING BEAST THAT HE FEELS WITHIN HIMSELF...
..BUT NOW, THAT PEACE IS ABOUT TO BE SHATTERED BY ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE ROYAL FAMILY WHO DOES NOT SHARE NAMOR'S KINSHIP WITH THE LAND DWELLERS.
HOW MAY I SERVE YOU, LORD KRANG?

NOT ME, MY LIEGE!
I COME TO YOU ON BEHALF OF YOUR PEOPLE! I HOLD IN MY ARMS THE BROKEN BODY OF MY COUSIN'S OWN BELOVED, STRUCK DOWN BY THE BLACK POISON OF THE LAND DWELLERS!
WHAT SAY YOU, MY LIEGE?
THEY ARE DESTROYING OUR WORLD JUST AS THEY DESTROY THEIR OWN! ARE WE TO SHARE IN THEIR FATE, NAMOR? WILL YOU HAVE US FOLLOW THEIR DOWNWARD SPIRAL?
YOU CAN NO LONGER TURN A BLIND EYE TO ALL THIS! WE MUST FIGHT BACK!
SO BE IT!
BRING ME MY BATTLE ARMOR!
I HAVE TOLERATED MANKIND'S FOLLY FOR FAR TOO LONG! THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE LAND DWELLERS TO FEEL THE WRATH OF ATLANTIS!
THEY WILL SOON COME TO FEAR THE POWER OF NAMOR!
IMPERIUS REX!
AS YOU COMMAND...


MEANWHILE
MOAN
GROAN
UUHHH
SIGH
WHAT HAPPENED TO US?
FROM THE TINGLING IN MY HEAD, I WOULD SAY THAT WE'D BEEN RENDERED UNCONSCIOUS BY SOME SORT OF SYNAPTIC-SCRAMBLER
FIRST IT WAS CHICKEN WINGFOOT, THEN MOLD-MAN, AND NOW THIS. CAN THINGS GET ANY WORSE?
AT LEAST YOU CAN STILL STAND TO LOOK AT YOURSELF IN THE MIRROR, KID.
I'M SORRY, BEN. THIS IS ALL MY FAULT
I HAD NO RIGHT TO ENDANGER THE REST OF YOU WITH MY WORK.
SAVE IT, REED. WE ALL KNEW THE RISKS FROM THE START
RIGHT NOW, ALL I WANNA DO IS FIND A WAY OUTTA HERE
WE'RE DOOMED. WHO KNOWS WHO WE'RE UP AGAINST NOW, OR EVEN WHY?!
SUCK IT UP, LITTLE BROTHER. WE'VE COME TOO FAR TO GIVE UP NOW.
SUE'S RIGHT. WE'VE GOT TO DEPEND ON EACH OTHER NOW.
INTERESTING THIS PARTICULAR PANEL IS A FAKE WALL, WITH AN ALMOST TRANSLUCENT QUALITY TO IT. MOST LIKELY AN OBSERVATION WINDOW.
GO WHY DON'T WE JUST HAVE BEN BUST US OUT OF HERE?
IF MEMORY SERVES, THESE WALLS ARE MADE FROM STARK INDUSTRIES VIBRANIUM POLY ALLOY. IT WILL SIMPLY ABSORB THE KINETIC ENERGY FROM HIS BLOWS BUT ITS THERMO-DYNAMIC QUALITIES ARE WANTING...
WERE ANY OF YOU DOING ANYTHING "FANTASTIC" WHEN WE WERE AMBUSHED?
"NO."
"NO."
"NO."

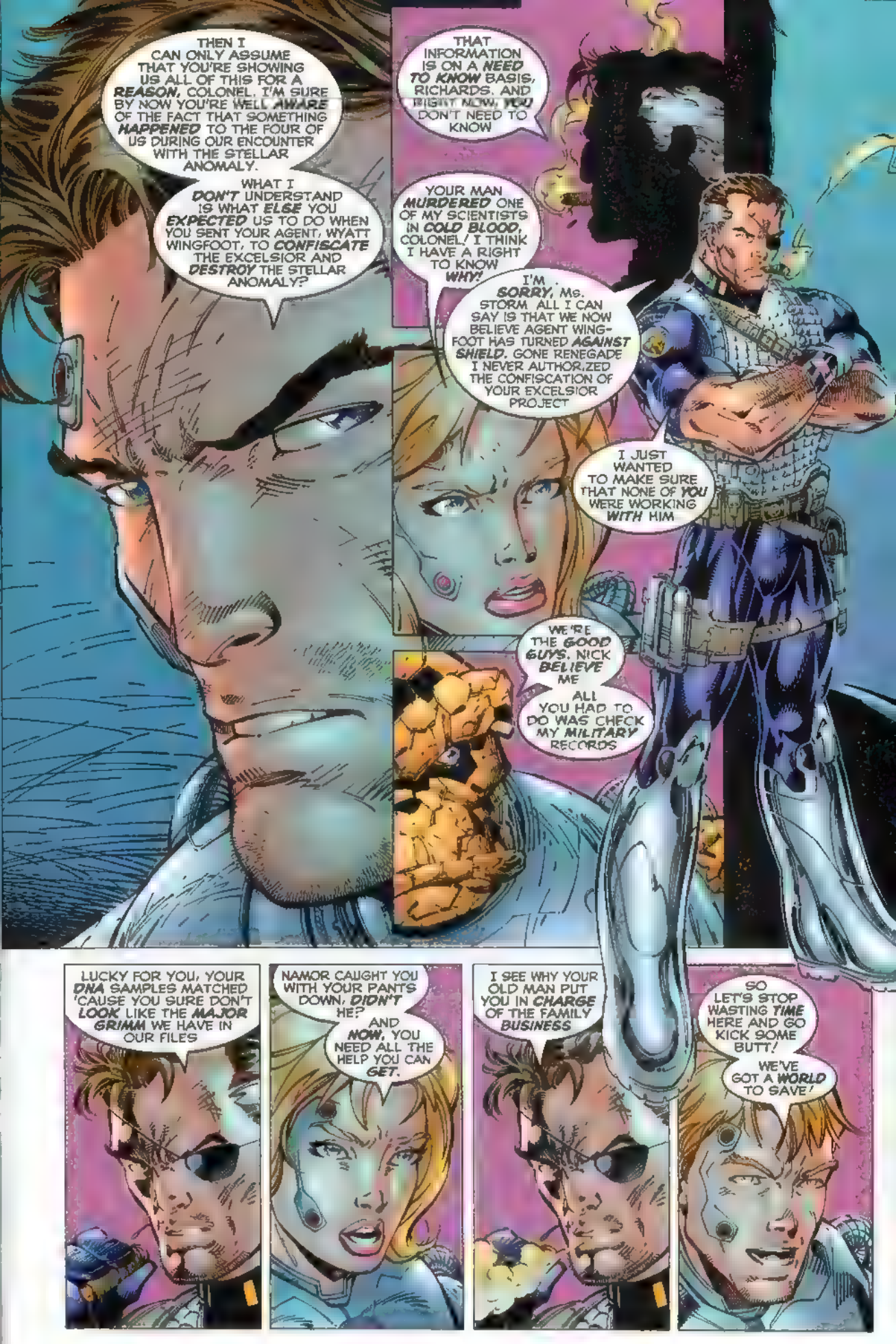
STATUS REPORT ON OUR GUESTS
THEY WOKE UP A LITTLE WHILE AGO, COUNTESS. RICHARDS KNOWS WE'RE WATCHING THEM, BUT THEY'RE ALL PLAYING IT COOL.
EXCEPT FOR THAT THING BACK THERE, THE OTHER THREE REGISTER BASE-LINE NORMAL ON OUR BIO-SCANNERS OTHERWISE IT'S BEEN KINDA BORING.
THEN FIND A WAY TO KEEP YOURSELVES AMUSED, HOPE! THOSE FOUR ARE THE ONLY CAPTURED SURVIVORS OF THAT STELLAR ANOMALY DISASTER, AND THE DIRECTOR WANTS TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED UP THERE
I'M TIRED OF PLAYING THIS WAITING GAME REED! IT'S TIME TO MAKE OUR OWN DOOR!
CRIPES! THE KID'S GONNA TORCH THE PLACE!
FWWOOSH
THIS IS NO TIME FOR YOUR THEATRICS! AT LEAST LET ME COVER THE OBSERVATION PANEL!
JUST AS I SUSPECTED --
WHILE THE POLY ALLOY IS HIGHLY IMPACT RESISTANT, IT HAS A LOW MELTING POINT
SLOW DOWN, JOHNNY! WE'VE GOT TO WORK AS A TEAM IF WE'RE GOING TO MAKE IT OUT OF HERE!
WHAT HAS RICHARDS DONE TO THE SCREEN?! WHAT'S GOING ON IN THERE?!
ENERGY READINGS ARE OFF THE SCALE, COUNTESS!
WE'VE LOST VISUAL, BUT OUR INFRARED SENSORS INDICATE THAT ONE OF THEM IS ON FIRE!
GET ME FURY!
HOPE!
"AND ALERT SECURITY! I ALSO WANT AIR-CAVALRY UNITS ON STAND-BY JUST IN CASE!"
THOSE GUYS'RE WEARING SHIELD UNIFORMS -- AND THEY'RE LOADED FOR BEAR! STAY BEHIND ME, KID!
I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF BEN!

JOHNNY! ARGUING AMONGST OURSELVES WON'T MAKE THIS ANY EASIER! JUST TRY LISTENING FOR A CHANGE!
NOW CREATE A FIREWALL TO KEEP THE GUARDS AT BAY!
I HEAR YOU, REED. CONSIDER THE GUARDS TAKEN CARE OF!
BUT REED, THEY'VE GOT US CORNERED. WE'RE STUCK IN A DEAD END!
KRNCH
NOT ANYMORE, SUZIE-Q!
THESE WALLS AIN'T MADE OUT OF THAT FANCY-SCHMANCY POLYMER STUFF, RIGHT, STRETCH?
PRECISELY!
THIS IS WHERE MAMA GRIMM'S LITTLE BOY STARTS OPENING HIS OWN DOORS! WHEREVER HE DANG WELL PLEASES!
BEN! WAIT! THAT LOOKS LIKE A STRUCTURAL SUPPORT PANEL WE NEED TO PROCEED WITH MORE CAUTION --
KATHAM
WHHSSH
TOO LATE, REED!
BESIDES, THAT'S JUST NOT HIS STYLE!
YEOOW!
LOOKS LIKE I OPENED THE WRONG DOOR! WATCH THAT FIRST STEP, FOLKS --


"--- IT'S A DOOZY!"
GOOD LORD! I'D HEARD THE RUMORS ABOUT A STRATEGIC AIR-BORNE MOBILE BATTLE PLATFORM...
...BUT I THOUGHT THEY WERE JUST STORIES, PUT OUT AS DISINFORMATION!
SHEESH! I'M FALLIN' TO MY DEATH, AND YER STILL LECTURIN'!
REED! MY FLAME'S DYING! I--I'M LOSING IT!
THE AIR'S TOO THIN FOR YOU, JOHNNY! RELAX -- I CAN SAVE BEN!
COUNTESS! AIR-CAV UNIT ALPHA HAS SIGHTED THE FUGITIVES OUTSIDE THE HELI-CARRIER AND IS IN PURSUIT!
ALPHA LEADER, THIS IS CONTROL. TAKE THE FUGITIVES INTO CUSTODY AND RETURN THEM TO THE DETENTION BLOCK, OVER!
WE LUCKED OUT THAT TIME, CONTROL.
BUT YOU KNOW THE COUNTESS'LL HAVE OUR BUTTS FOR THAT BREACH.
ROGER THAT, CONTROL. ALL THE FUGITIVES HAVE BEEN CAPTURED AND ARE IN CUSTODY.
WE'RE RETURNING TO THE HELI-CARRIER WITH THEM NOW.

"GOOD WORK, ALPHA LEADER. WE'LL BE RIGGING UP SYNAPTIC-DAMPENERS TO KEEP THEM IN LINE."
THINK WE'RE HEADED FOR THE FIRING SQUAD, REED?
IF THAT WERE THE CASE BEN, I DON'T THINK THEY WOULDN'T HAVE BOTHERED [illegible] US
I HAVE A FEELING THAT
" THERE IS MORE GOING ON HERE THAN MEETS THE EYE."
TALK TO ME, DUM-DUM. WHAT'S THE LATEST WORD?
SONAR BUOYS HAVE BEEN TRACKING THAT MASSIVE INBOUND SUB-SURFACE SIGNATURE HEADED TOWARDS NEW YORK CITY. BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, OUR SATELLITE IMAGING NOW CONFIRMS AN IMMENSE NUMBER OF BOGEYS JUST OFF THE COAST OF MANHATTAN
WHATEVER'S GOING ON, IT'S BIG, NICK. YOU REALLY THINK IT'S HIM?
JUST A HUNCH, DUM-DUM. WHAT KIND OF FIREPOWER DO WE HAVE IN THE AREA?
NOTHING THAT'LL STAND UP TO THAT KIND OF AGGRESSOR FORCE. I'D SAY THE HELI-CARRIER'S OUR BEST SHOT BUT IT'LL STILL TAKE US AT LEAST A COUPLE OF HOURS TO GET THERE...
AND WE DON'T HAVE THAT KINDA TIME.
DO YOU HAVE ANY MORE GOOD NEWS FOR ME TODAY?
YOUR GUESTS HAVE JUST ARRIVED
SO YOU'RE THE CLOWNS WHO DECIDED TO GO FOR A JOYRIDE INTO SPACE AND BLOW THAT STELLAR ANOMALY OUT OF THE SKY?
TELL ME WHO YOU ARE AND WHY I SHOULDN'T JUST LOCK YOU UP AND THROW AWAY THE KEY?
FURY
THAT'S COLONEL NICK FURY? WAR HERO AND BIG TIME SPOOK. HE SAVED MY HIDE AFTER I GOT SHOT DOWN. I ALWAYS THOUGHT HE WAS ONE OF THE GOOD GUYS.
PERHAPS HE IS, BEN.
COLONEL, MY NAME IS REED RICHARDS. WE ARE NOT YOUR ENEMY. OUR GOAL WAS TO STOP YOUR AGENT, WYATT WINGFOOT, FROM DESTROYING THAT STELLAR ANOMALY
UNFORTUNATELY, WE FAILED. AS A RESULT --

COLONEL FURY!
THE BOGEYS HAVE SURFACED AND ARE NOW ATTACKING NEW YORK CITY!
GIVE ME A VISUAL!
HUMANS! HEED MY WORDS!
FOR TOO LONG HAVE THE CITIZENS OF ATLANTIS, AS WELL AS THE OTHER DENIZENS OF THE SEA, SUFFERED AT YOUR HANDS FROM YOUR INDUSTRIAL POLLUTANTS AND TOXIC WASTE! BUT THE TIME OF RECKONING HAS COME AT LEAST, AND YOUR RETRIBUTION IS AT HAND!
NOW SHALL YOU FEEL OUR WRATH!
DAMN! IT IS HIM IT'S NAMOR, THE SUB-MARINER!
AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, HE STILL LOOKS YOUNGER THAN ME. BUT WHAT THE HECK HAS GOTTEN HIM ALL RILED UP NOW?
NO ONE'S SEEN OR HEARD FROM HIM SINCE THE BIG ONE!
SIR, HOSTILE FORCES ARE OVERRUNNING THE ENTIRE ISLAND OF MANHATTAN! THEY'RE CONVERGING ON THE U.N. BUILDING!
I I ALWAYS THOUGHT HE WAS JUST A LEGEND.
WELL, SUZIE, THE B'G APPLE'S GETTIN' A MAJOR DOSE OF REALITY!
THERE'S GOTTA BE SOMETHING WE CAN DO!
NAMOR AND HIS BOYS HAVE JUST LAUNCHED A FULL SCALE WAR AGAINST ALL MANKIND, KID.
I'M NOT SO SURE IF EVEN SHIELD HAS GOT THE NECESSARY FIREPOWER TO STAND UP TO HIM BUT PRAYIN' MIGHT HELP


THEN I CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT YOU'RE SHOWING US ALL OF THIS FOR A REASON, COLONEL. I'M SURE BY NOW YOU'RE WELL AWARE OF THE FACT THAT SOMETHING HAPPENED TO THE FOUR OF US DURING OUR ENCOUNTER WITH THE STELLAR ANOMALY.
WHAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND IS WHAT ELSE YOU EXPECTED US TO DO WHEN YOU SENT YOUR AGENT, WYATT WINGFOOT, TO CONFISCATE THE EXCELSIOR AND DESTROY THE STELLAR ANOMALY?
THAT INFORMATION IS ON A NEED TO KNOW BASIS, RICHARDS. AND RIGHT NOW, YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW
YOUR MAN MURDERED ONE OF MY SCIENTISTS IN COLD BLOOD, COLONEL! I THINK I HAVE A RIGHT TO KNOW WHY!
I'M SORRY, MS. STORM. ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT WE NOW BELIEVE AGENT WINGFOOT HAS TURNED AGAINST SHIELD. GONE RENEGADE I NEVER AUTHORIZED THE CONFISCATION OF YOUR EXCELSIOR PROJECT
I JUST WANTED TO MAKE SURE THAT NONE OF YOU WERE WORKING WITH HIM
WE'RE THE GOOD GUYS, NICK BELIEVE ME
ALL YOU HAD TO DO WAS CHECK MY MILITARY RECORDS
LUCKY FOR YOU, YOUR DNA SAMPLES MATCHED 'CAUSE YOU SURE DON'T LOOK LIKE THE MAJOR GRIMM WE HAVE IN OUR FILES
NAMOR CAUGHT YOU WITH YOUR PANTS DOWN, DIDN'T HE?
AND NOW, YOU NEED ALL THE HELP YOU CAN GET.
I SEE WHY YOUR OLD MAN PUT YOU IN CHARGE OF THE FAMILY BUSINESS
SO LET'S STOP WASTING TIME HERE AND GO KICK SOME BUTT!
WE'VE GOT A WORLD TO SAVE!

LATER, ATOP THE S.H.I.E.L.D. HELI-CARRIER FLIGHT DECK...
NIFTY SET O' THREADS
HEY, ISN'T THIS MADE OUT OF THE UNSTABLE MOLECULE STUFF YOU INVENTED BACK IN SCHOOL, REED?
YOU'RE RIGHT, BEN. I NEVER REALIZED I "LICENSED" IT TO S.H.I.E.L.D.
EXCUSE ME, SOLDIER. MAY I BORROW THAT TAPE?
SURE THING, MA'AM
YOU GONNA START PACKING HARDWARE, SIS?
HARDLY
I JUST WANT TO MAKE IT CLEAR TO EVERYONE THAT WE DON'T WORK FOR S.H.I.E.L.D.
THAT WE ARE OUR OWN TEAM.
THE FOUR OF US TOGETHER.
YOU'RE RIGHT, SUE. I BELIEVE A FANTASTIC TWIST OF FATE BROUGHT THE FOUR OF US TOGETHER
AND IMBUED EACH OF US WITH INCREDIBLE POWERS. TO WHAT ULTIMATE PURPOSE OR DESTINY, I CANNOT SAY.
BUT OUR FIRST CHALLENGE IS CLEAR! AND WE'VE NO TIME TO WASTE! NEW YORK CITY IS IN DIRE NEED OF THE UNIQUE TALENTS OF THE ...FANTASTIC FOUR!
COOL NAME, REED!
YOU KNOW GUYS, THIS SUPER-HERO GIG COULD BE A GREAT MARKETING GIMMICK!
I MEAN ALL WE NEED NOW ARE SOME HIP-HAPPENIN' CODE NAMES
SHOULDA FIGURED YOU'D COME UP WITH SOME SORTA LICENSING ANGLE TO MAKE MONEY OFF OF THIS.
JUST REMEMBER, KID, I WANT MY SHARE OF THE ROYALTIES!
ASSUMING WE SURVIVE THIS LATEST FIASCO!

NEW YORK CITY...
MY LIEGE! VICTORY IS OURS!
IT SHALL ONLY BE THE FIRST IN OUR RELENTLESS CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE LAND DWELLERS!
THEY WILL RUE THE DAY }KOFF{ THAT THEY DARED CROSS SWORDS WITH THE SUB-MARINER!
}KOFF{
HEY, FISHSTICKS! THIS SHOW AIN'T OVER YET!
Eh?
TAXI
'CAUSE I'M ABOUT TO MAKE YOU THE CATCH OF THE DAY!
I'LL HOOK HIM UP WITH SOME GROUND FIRE, BEN.
THEN HE'S ALL YOURS TO REEL IN!
KABOOM
AARRGH!
WHO ARE THESE SUPER-POWERED MORTALS?
WE'RE THE FANTASTIC FOUR! AND WE'RE HERE TO TOSS YOU AND ALL YOUR CRONIES BACK INTO THE SEA, CHARLIE!
KERPLASH
FOOL!
HUUNGH!

YOU'VE JUST SEALED YOUR DOOM!
THE OCEAN IS MY DOMAIN!
GRRRGLE?!
THEY STILL HAVEN'T SURFACED! BEN MUST BE TAKING NAMOR TO TOWN!
BEN!
WHAM
HERE, I AM AT MY STRONGEST!
YOU ARE TRULY A WORTHY OPPONENT, BUT NO MATCH FOR THE SON OF ATLANTIS!
I SEE THAT YOUR FRIENDS HAVE COME TO JOIN THE FRAY!
THEN PERHAPS IT IS TIME THAT I CALL UPON MY OWN REINFORCEMENTS, AND END THIS BATTLE, ONCE AND FOR ALL!
Oh MY GOD!
UP UNTIL NOW, I'VE BEEN CONTENT TO MERELY USE MY ATLANTEAN SHOCK TROOPS AGAINST YOUR HUMAN FORCES!
BUT SINCE MANKIND HAS BROUGHT ITS SUPER-POWERED BEINGS TO BEAR, IT IS TIME FOR ME TO BLOW THE TRUMPET-HORN AND CALL UPON MY OWN DOOMSDAY WEAPON!

BEHOLD, THE GREAT WHALE, GIGANTO!
A MONSTROUS CREATURE SPAWNED BY THE VERY POISON THAT YOU HAVE SO RECKLESSLY DISCARDED INTO THE WATERS OF THE WORLD!
ON THIS DAY, HIS VENGEANCE WILL NOT BE DENIED!
RRARR
NEXT: ENTER THE AVENGERS!

Fantastic Four®

c/o Marvel Comics, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016

As of this writing, the all-new FF has been on sale for only a few days–but we've still managed to snag a few early missives from the internet...

Jim & Co.;

I wasn't sure what to expect with the relaunch of "The World's Greatest Comic Magazine". Sure, everyone knew it was going to be spectacular, but the the actual product...wow!!! Just Wow!!! Congratulations guys!

Kevin Moore
moorek@oem.doe.gov

Thanks, Kevin! And congratulations on writing the first letter to see print!

Dear FANTASTIC FOUR,

I felt like I was discovering the FANTASTIC FOUR all over again! I was a kid again!! A twist in the original version, but it gave it the 90s feel!! This is the best artwork I have seen on the FANTASTIC FOUR for a long, long time!! I was so excited when I got the first issue, I started dancing the "Macarena" on my coffee table!!!

Paul Dale Roberts
60 Parkshore Circle
Sacramento, Ca 95831
Silhouet@ix.netcom..com

Hope you've got some sturdy furniture at home, Paul, because we plan to keep you dancing for a long time...

FF people,

The best way to describe reading this series is to equate it to watching a new, big budget film version of FANTASTIC FOUR. All the same familiar old elements are in place: Doctor Doom, The Mole Man, Cosmic Radiation, and of course the four characters themselves. But, there is something different, something fresh. These classic tales are now a part of our modern world now more than ever. I am not a fan of FANTASTIC FOUR, and so bought it for a simple reason, Jim Lee. But I will continue to read it after his tenure if the quality remains the same. I am sure many others feel the same way. Thanks for the great work.

Jeremy Orr
jorr@infoway.lib.nm.us

You guys did Stan and Jack proud.

Chris Burnham
4330-1 Timber-Ridge Trail SW
Wyoming, MI 49509-4202

Thanks, Chris, we can't ask for a more generous compliment than that. The classic FF work by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby continues to serve as the very finest of inspirations.

NEXT MONTH: Together again for the first time! As Namor's armies continue to tear up New york City, things get too hot for even the fabulous FF to handle–so prepare yourself for the coming of the mighty AVENGERS!

Also this month in the HEROES REBORN titles:

AVENGERS #2: Featuring the Avengers' greatest foe: Kang the Conqueror! Traveling through time to the 20th Century, the arrogant Kang wreaks havoc for Earth's Mightiest Heroes when he steals their weapons for his blushing bride-to-be!

CAPTAIN AMERICA #2: Introducing the Falcon and the Red Skull! Two factions move desperately to hunt down Cap: Nick Fury of S.H.I.E.L.D. and the insidious organization led by evil incarnate, the Red Skull! All this, plus the Falcon flies again!

IRON MAN #2: This is it, the ultimate battle of technology vs. nature: a fully-powered Iron Man vs. the rampaging green goliath known as the Hulk! This is a war for the history books–if anyone is left standing to write about it!

Dan Nakrosis, Assistant Editor • Mike Heisler, Editor